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FM AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1577
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY 4317
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 2129
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 1994
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL PRIORITY 2565
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0892
RHMFIUU/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE PRIORITY 2905
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ASHGABAT 001242

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/CEN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [ECON](#) [TX](#)

SUBJECT: TURKMENISTAN: ELECTIONS, GOVERNMENT ACADEMY AND
MINISTERIAL APPOINTMENT MARK CABINET MEETING

REF: ASHGABAT 0912

¶1. (U) Sensitive but unclassified. Not for public Internet.

¶2. (SBU) SUMMARY: During an expanded session of the Cabinet of Ministers on September 12, the president and cabinet officials discussed plans for December's parliamentary elections, which the international community will be invited to observe, and the establishment of a new academy for civil servants. The Minister for Economy and Development was also dismissed, and is to be replaced by a longtime functionary from the Central Bank of Turkmenistan. The establishment of an institution for government service demonstrates the government's awareness that it has a human capacity problem. END SUMMARY.

¶3. (SBU) During an expanded session of the Cabinet of Ministers on September 12, the president and cabinet officials discussed plans for December's parliamentary elections, which the international community will be invited to observe. The president noted that parliamentary elections will be held on December 14, and election campaigning should begin on October 14. He recommended that several candidates compete for each parliamentary seat. He also announced that "observers from foreign countries and international organizations" should be invited to monitor the elections, but he did not identify any specific organizations. (NOTE: All the original 65 deputy seats are up for grabs, and an additional 60 seats will be added upon adoption of the new constitution on September 26. END NOTE.)

¶4. (SBU) The president also signed an order establishing a two-year government academy for public service. The academy's main mission will be to train a cadre of new young government personnel in an effort to improve current human capacity problems in government institutions. The academy will be subordinate to the presidential administration. Representatives from the Ministry of Education, the Supreme Council for Science and Technology, and the Ministry of Justice were tasked with developing the curriculum, an organizational structure, and admission policies for the academy within 30 days. The decree includes a provision

allowing the academy to bring in foreign experts and instructors as needed.

15. (SBU) During the session, the president also dismissed Minister for Economy and Development Gurbanmurat Gurbanmuradov for shortcomings at work and failing to fulfill his duties. Former Deputy Minister for Economy and Development Bashimmurat Hojamammedov was appointed minister. Gurbanmuradov had held the ministerial post for only seven and a half months. He had been appointed in February 2008 when the Ministry of Economy and Finance, where he had been serving as deputy minister, split into two separate finance and economic development ministries.

16. (SBU) USAID representatives met with Central Bank of Turkmenistan representatives in early July to discuss extending its Accounting/CIPA program. Hojamammedov met with the USAID representatives, having been introduced as CBT's Chief Accountant (reftel). He was an engaged interlocutor, and was very appreciative and supportive of the program. Since then, there had been no decree published announcing his appointment as Deputy Minister for Economy and Development. If he truly served as deputy minister, it would have only been for two months at most.

17. (SBU) Hojamammedov's official biography noted that he was born in 1966 in Akoba village in Balkan province. He graduated in 1990 from the Turkmen State Institute of Economy and Management with a major in Economics. From 1990 to 1993 he worked as an economist in the department of operational records at Turkmenistan State Commercial Bank. From 1993 to

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2008 Hojamammedov held various positions at the Central Bank of Turkmenistan, including management posts in the department of accounting and reporting, and an auditing section. He was appointed Deputy Minister for Economy and Development sometime in 2008.

18. (SBU) COMMENT: Although it is too early to assess how a new government service academy will affect the Turkmen government's deficiencies within the ranks of the bureaucracy, it is a sure sign the government is aware that it needs to develop expertise and capacity in order to facilitate institutional reform. It is a further positive sign that the decree leaves room for the academy to bring in institutional experts from abroad to ensure the academy's curriculum meets the government's needs. END COMMENT.
CURRAN